

# **BOZART and Contemporary Verse**

*Combining JAPM and The Oracle*

Founded by ERNEST HARTSOCK



JULY-AUGUST—1931

OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY. GEORGIA

## CONTRIBUTORS

Clinton Scollard, one of America's most widely known poets, lives in New York. Elizabeth Newcomb writes from Knoxville, Tenn. Mary Eleanor Roberts is a Philadelphia poetess. The editors in this issue are Harold Vinal, of *Voices*, Caroline Giltinan of *Carillon*, Washington, D. C.; Edith Mirick, of *Star-Dust*, Washington, D. C., and Olga Achtenhagen, of the *Angelos*, Appleton, Wis. Anne Pence Davis writes from Wichita Falls, Texas, and William Allen Ward from Dallas. Marion E. Beecher lives in Atlantic City, N. J. *Twist o' Smoke* is an Evanston, Ill., poet. Maude Barnes Miller is from St. Louis, Mo. John Mebane writes from High Point, N. C. Sara Henderson Hay lives in Anniston, Ala. Dorothy Belle Flanagan, Kansas City, is the author of "Dark Certainty," this year's volume of the Yale Series of Younger Poets. Harold Lincoln Kerr is from Chicago, Ill. Don Gordon writes from San Francisco. John Richard Moreland is a widely read Virginia poet. Louis Ginsberg, Patterson, N. J., contributes to a wide group of periodicals.

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Founded by ERNEST HARTSOCK  
THORNWELL JACOBS, *Managing Editor*  
MARY BRENT WHITESIDE, *Editor*

*Associate Editors*

DR. JAMES ROUTH, BENJAMIN MUSSER, NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

Published Six Times a Year by OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY PRESS,  
Oglethorpe University, Georgia.

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## TWO SONGS OF MORNING

### I

And now the morning bursts into applause  
Of elm and cypress, weaving slender boughs  
Against the crimson sky; the massive jaws  
Of morning snap at dark; a red sun plows  
Through avenues of dawn, splitting the dark  
Into a thousand syllables of night  
Till Shamash batters at the last bulwark,  
The barrackhouse of dreams—and it is light.

The morning drifts along the windowpanes  
Of houses neatly numbered row by row,  
Snuggles against them, pushes, thrusts and strains;  
And sleepy-lidded housewives come and go  
To make the fires and talk of aching pains  
And lie in bed while teapots overflow.

### II

Now it is morning and the stolid sun  
Beams down upon us and we lift our eyes  
To greet it with a slow and mild surprise  
And meditate another day begun.  
What if our eyes refuse to murder sleep,  
Our arms to move, our stiffened legs to run?  
What if our bodies shed to skeleton,  
Our dull bones rattle and our sockets weep?

How strange it is unpatterned thoughts should stream  
Half dully through our brains to take their shape  
In grotesque images. Our thoughts escape...  
What bird outside our windows sings and sings?  
Are we awake—or do we dream these things?

—JOHN MEBANE

## FOR A CERTAIN MUCH PHOTOGRAPHED LADY

She looks on life with slightly tilted nose;  
Its gaucheries leave her definitely chilly—  
She'd like a whiff of Coty's on the rose,  
A little well-placed guilt upon the lily!

—SARA HENDERSON HAY



## THE JUDGE

The judge was grey, and slim, and well-preserved,  
And versed in legal lore and precedent;  
He led the talk with courteous forehead bent,  
And slender fingers delicately curved.  
For sixty years he'd seen, detached, reserved,  
Exactly what the whole creation meant;  
He judged the coming, by the past event,  
And doomed equality as it deserved.  
But we, who stood a'tip-toe on the wings  
Of all the past, although we heard him speak,  
Behind his head, saw breathless morning brim  
Over the mountains, lighting hidden things.  
Life was a Treasure Hunt of hide and seek,  
And surely wisdom would not die with him.

—MARY ELEANOR ROBERTS

## LISBETH

Lisbeth was an elfish child  
Who played and laughed and ran,  
But really she was Tinker Bell,  
In love with Peter Pan.

When sums were long and tiresome,  
She sat there very still....  
Her hand was in the Brushwood Boy's,  
Atop a windy hill.

When Lisbeth's braids grew longer  
She bent her sunny head  
In sorrow with Maid Marian,  
For Robin Hood was dead.

She pledged troth to a faithless lad,  
Then learned he loved her not,  
And with the lily maid, she wept  
For him, her Launcelot.

The yellow curls are shorn now,  
And Lisbeth wears a veil.  
I think she's gone with Galahad  
To find the Holy Grail.

—OLGA ACHTENHAGEN

## GREEN PEAS

*(In the Orchard)*

She sits among the apple trees,  
Her fingers busy shelling peas.  
I hear the squeak of pod on pod  
Caught up in handfuls from the sod;  
Crisp crack of tissue that she crushes  
Before the green horde outward rushes;  
The rattle of the round, firm peas  
Into the kettle on her knees;  
The soft impact of empty cases  
Falling through little sunlit spaces  
On other peascods in a basket...  
Trinkets tossed into a casket.

She stops to catch the cool green spheres  
In old hands beautiful with years,  
Holding their smoothness in her palm.  
Some, like a neatly measured psalm,  
Drop rhythmically to join their brothers;  
Her fingers close; she keeps the others  
To play with them, then let them go  
Suddenly... as thoughts that grow  
Rounded and polished from long brooding  
Rush to quick speech at their concluding.

Has she forgotten I am there?  
Quiet hand and foot and chair.  
Only a little wandering tune  
Betrays her in another June,  
An older time remote from me,  
Familiar to the greening tree.

She turns; she sees me, with a laugh  
Clear as a bird-call, light as chaff,  
Merry as her scampering spheres.  
Is this the voice of eighty years!  
"I think (she speaks with quiet ease)  
You're hungry for the first green peas."

—ELEANOR STEVENS

## BROKEN TRYST

How many days till the first of May?  
How many days you say?  
Saturdays, Sundays, three times three  
Before my lover comes back to me.

I've watched in the May sun all day long  
Chattering, gabbling this maudlin song:  
"Love past May Day  
Has no Hey Day."

I hopefully gazed in the well at noon  
Preening myself like a mating loon;  
The water reflected no bridegroom's face....  
A mirror showed me no veil of lace;  
Just a thin, wan girl in a shroud of mist  
Remembering sadly a broken tryst.

—ANNE PENCE DAVIS

## TO FAITH HARLOW

My daughter is a living flame!  
She changed my earth and sky;  
But this she cannot realize  
Until, at her own daughter's eyes,  
She worships... as do I.

—CAROLINE GILTINAN

## TO ZIMBALIST PLAYING

Women cease to shrug their shoulders  
Bare, and coldly white;  
Men stare straight before them into  
A singing light.

And you, you must have quite forgotten  
Earth, and the clinging sod,  
Even yourself—remembering only  
Music and God.

—MARION E. BEECHER

## THE POETS

### *Blake*

We must dance on the end of a pin,  
Butterfly!  
Happiness is a sin  
And we must die.  
We have lived for transient things,  
The light and shade that summer brings,  
But once we knew the joy of wings,  
You and I.

### *Browning*

Grasp this—all else subsides—  
Dreams are elusive—  
Truth conclusive.  
Whatever is is truth,  
And truth abides.

### *Emily Dickenson*

I have not seen volcanoes  
But I can sense their heat,  
And though I have not tasted love  
I know it would be sweet.

### *Robert Frost*

This is the way I want to go—  
Quietly in the night,  
And have them find my face alight  
In a morning of new snow.

### *Masefield*

I am sealed so far within myself  
That you may turn the key  
From vestibule to vestibule  
But not discover me.

—TWIST O' SMOKE



## REVOLT AGAINST POETRY

Why do I sit and ponder on a word  
Like any foolish, moth-like devotee,  
Wasting my sleep and sunshine doggedly  
For something that the muse has nine times heard?  
And when a few have carelessly concurred,  
Snatching an hour's tithe for poetry,  
"I thought the same," and "So it seemed to me,"  
How much of love or gain is mine transferred?

Why should I sweat to say what all men feel?  
When I might spur life on to get and give.  
Only the weak, who cannot fully live  
Interpret life, record the beau ideal,  
Weaving their naked souls into a song  
To clothe in immortality the strong.

—MAUDE BARNES MILLER

## BLASPHEMER

Jan's rootless faith had withered in The Drought  
Of two hard years. He could not wear defeat  
As if it were a rag of judgment, meet  
For sinners. Yet, he grew almost devout,  
And sang of love, at last when wheat fields bloomed.  
He sang—and then a scourge of rain began.  
It flayed the tall, ripe grain along the span  
Of lowland farms, and every crop was doomed.

In Jan's new sod house, higher than the river,  
The settlers gathered. Some one tried to pray:  
"His will be done. He gives—and takes away—"  
A harsh cry, "Ja! Your God—an Indian Giver!"  
Burst on the meek. And Jan, in ribald wrath,  
Fled, stumbling, on a lightning sheeted path.

—LESLIE DYKSTRA

## GIFTS

*(To Be Sung at Dusk in May)*

First a song for you—rainbow words for a moon-white voice—sing them when March winds hurry to keep a rendezvous this twelve-month with naked willows...when rain-fingers caress April violets...when May sunlight is spread over all the hills like honey and at night the earth's a dancing girl in a platinum veil of moon mist

A tune—what's an eagle without wings?—soft as the sun's kiss on morning-glory lips...strong as the night shouldering its burden of a million stars...sweet as love is sweet...bitter as love is bitter

Take this song, this tune  
Play with them  
Keep them  
Throw them away....

Throw them away for I have chestfuls of other nothings, beautiful nothings...silver dreams...star chains...a round frosted cake moon...a river afraid of the sea...

Take these playthings  
These beautiful nothings  
Gather them in handfuls.

See, I give you a song, a tune, chestfuls of beautiful nothings. I ask nothing in return, for I want so much and need so little.

But remember me.  
When a maiden moon  
Lies in the arms  
Of her lover, night—  
Then think  
—for a little while—  
of me.

—FRANK MARSHALL DAVIS

## MADMAN

One whom men accounted mad  
Dwelt in Ramoth-Gilead:

Mad because he said the morn  
Was a garment to be worn

Thankfully each risen day:  
Mad because he loved to play

Dance-staves on the psaltery:  
Mad because he seemed to see  
Mirth in every flower and tree:

Mad because he'd often hum  
Songs beneath his breath from some  
Inner gay delirium:

Mad because he thought to find  
Messages borne down the wind  
From the overbrooding Mind.

Glad he lived his life, though mad,  
He of Ramoth-Gilead.

—CLINTON SCOLLARD

## THE HARP

Do not touch your harp today.  
Wait until the rain  
Slips its crumpled silver  
Crepe across the pane.  
Who plays his harp on sunny day  
Plays his harp in vain.

Wait until the winter dark  
Forests all the sky;  
Then, and never sooner,  
When the wind-owls cry,  
Take your harp and dust it  
And play it, lest you die.

—ELIZABETH NEWCOMB

## SELF ADMONITION

A poetess should always be  
A creature of fragility,

Wearing dreams upon her face  
As delicate as cobweb lace.

Her smile should be of gossamer,  
Marking that each spoken word

Flutters softly as a bird  
As if shy fancies stirred in her.

A poetess should never care  
To paint her lips and curl her hair,

And know that there is happiness  
Sewn into a scarlet dress.

She should sing a lover's kiss,  
Not move joyously to this;

She should know that it is best  
Never to sleep breast to breast:

Ecstasy's full-brimming cup  
Was not meant for her to sup.

This, her duty, is made plain:  
Ethereal she should remain.

A poetess must learn at birth,  
Never to touch foot to earth.

—DOROTHY BELLE FLANAGAN

## BROTHERS OF GODS

I have seen W. T. Marshall demonstrate  
Newton and Euclid on a blackboard,  
and then disprove them by Einstein's  
"Theory of Equivalence."

I have seen a woman lying prone and wan  
upon a white bed, fondling a tiny baby  
with a new red skin and a puckered mouth.



I think I have seen God and His brother, Man.

At Choisson I saw the bursting breech  
of a .75MM gun disembowel my brother.  
Marching through shell blasted Bois  
I saw the burst lips and green, eyeless faces  
of three hundred gas-dead peasants.

I think I have seen Satan and His brother, Man.

—HAROLD LINCOLN KERR

### SEA LOVE

My father dearly loved a book,  
His father loved the plow, the loam;  
But my great grand-sire, like a brook,  
Was of the sea, it was his home.

My sire left me his booky touch,  
It was his only legacy;  
My father's father's hand can clutch  
A bough and it inveigles me.

But deeper in my bone and blood  
Than heritage of book or loam,  
The sea can shake me like a flood,  
And toss me helpless as its foam,

Till I forget all else but these:  
The wordless wind, the ebb and flow  
Of rivers, and the curling seas  
White as the dog-wood's stars of snow.

Surely my father loved a book,  
My father's father plowed with zest;—  
But these were little loves that took  
Their penny wage, then welcomed rest.

But my great grand-sire, day and night,  
Was never happy save when he  
Watched the great ocean waves break bright.  
And he bequeathed this love to me.

—JOHN RICHARD MORELAND

## EURYLOCHUS

The sea arched its tawny bow across horizons bending under wind;  
The black prow, homeward after Troy, sank through foam and rock  
And clove Aeëa's sandy flank.

This was the Isle of Circe, girdled with ivory, coiled in the waste sea.  
The very air transformed the heart of man; the young Greeks of  
Ulysses, the war-lean Ithacan spears,  
Moved to her secret halls.

She was the world's lust and the world's love;  
Birth and re-birth, the long dying and the dreaming anew.  
The body of Circe was sunlight and sea-light and star;  
But the soul of Circe hungered, ate of darkness, forever hungered  
more.

The young men looked upon the mouth of darkness;  
The young men drank her Pramnian wine, drank the wine of wonder  
and were mad;  
The eyes of Circe, flower-sweet and terrible as death, the eyes of  
Circe stared upon her swine.

Eurylochus tarried, alone of all the men of war;  
Eurylochus knew the witch-wine waited, guessed the degradation  
in the dregs;  
Eurylochus shunned her wild, enchanted halls; Eurylochus crept  
sanely to the sea.

\* \* \*

Long afterwards the freed swine told their tale:  
How Circe had herself held out the maddening wine;  
How from her golden hands they ate the lowly mast...  
And now, in Ithaca, they smiled who once had followed beauty to  
her lair.

Eurylochus only told no tale, or remembered wine, or tasted lees and  
doubt:  
Was man for the stormless breath, the way of the bound sleeper  
by the sea;  
Or the way of Circean swine rooting in dust at beauty's pallid feet.

—DON GORDON

## "SCORNER OF THE GROUND..."

*For Ernest Hartsock*

Surely they waited for him at the portals,  
Hearing his step along the dusky way  
That leads into the Light,—the young immortals:  
High Shelley, with his hair in disarray;  
Dark lion-headed Byron, deep eyes glistening;  
The little Keats, somberly grave and spare;  
Pale Chatterton, the slim boy, nervous, listening;  
And Brooke,—young Brooke, smiling and debonaire.

They must have waited for him in a cluster.  
Shelley, impetuous, rushed into the dark,  
Perhaps, to lead the frail newcomer up,  
And then, he stood among them, with the lustre  
Of suns upon him, like a sky-blown lark,  
Watching them lift the shadowy stirrup-cup.

—EDITH MIRICK

## WHITE CONFSSIONAL

See how calm and still with the slow grace of swans  
On limpid waters there drift down to me  
The water-lilies of a white confessional!  
Out of the music born of the surge of waters  
A soul invaded dream of water-lilies  
Is song to pulse the pollen gilded throats...

And now like pearls that form themselves in beads  
To sleep upon the throat of lovely woman  
I count a dream of flowers,  
Pale words of inarticulate petals languor tipped,  
O white confessional.

Water-lilies,  
Why do you tell me at the lakeside silence  
These white unutterable satin-shimmering things?  
The whirl of the quails' wings had never told me,  
Nor the purple flaked throat of the blackbird,  
Nor the sunlight in the dance of leaves—  
Never had they told me...

—DWIGHT STRICKLAND

## EVENING IN MUNICH

Therein was friendly company enough,  
The fire burned, a large and ruddy heart,  
There was incautious talk, perhaps too gruff,  
And gaiety to make the evening start.  
And yet for all the laughter I was lonely,  
Although both light and drollery were near,  
And suddenly I wanted you, you only,—  
What could I do but drown myself in beer.

The gutteral tides swept round me and a band  
Played Strauss around the corner and the waiters  
Brought large beers by the dozens in a land  
Of mugs and pretzels: to my neck in foam  
I stumbled out and left that room of satyrs—  
And sobbed aloud, three thousand miles from home.

—HAROLD VINAL

## HYMN TO NEW YORK SKYSCRAPERS

Now your glory has begun  
To harass oblivion:  
O New York, in soaring high,  
You keep trafficking with sky.  
Up through you, what meanings grope?  
Through you climbs what secret hope?  
What design to you is known,  
Mighty question, clothed in stone?

Not by any idle chance,  
But in struggling up through you,  
Mankind battles, conquers, too,  
All his insignificance;  
And through you, it seeks the power  
So it can transcend death's hour.

Buildings, leap! Arches, sweep!  
Pinnacles, forever keep  
Flinging up your spires! Raise  
Adoration of your praise,  
Skyscrapers with terraced pinions  
Storm high from dark dominions!  
Mount, towers, Soar to Heaven!  
Mount, towers! Lift your cry!



Mount, towers! Let the leaven  
Of your dreaming wing you high!  
Mount, towers! Soar and teach  
Mankind's littleness to reach  
Ever greater heights till it  
Grapple with the Infinite!

—LOUIS GINSBERG

## CINQUAINS

1.

### *Nun*

Night  
Is a dark robed nun  
Who walks across the foot hills  
Turning on the candlesticks before  
The altar of darkness.

2.

### *Failure*

Failure  
Is Opportunity's ghost  
That comes back to haunt us  
When we are old!

3

### *Bigots*

Bigots  
Are cowards who  
Live in the bog of creed  
Rather than climb the mountain top  
Of thought.

—WILLIAM ALLEN WARD

# PASTURE ON PARNASSUS

By MARY BRENT WHITESIDE

*Over the Embers (Some Sonnets and Songs)*, by C. J. M. Turner  
(Privately printed).

This attractive little collection of poems by a South Carolina poet contains selections that have been reprinted from a number of the poetry magazines and from an English Anthology.

The sequence of sonnets occupying the first half of the book have the simplicity of complete sincerity. For the most part this poet's lines are felicitously phrased, and if he fails of the white hot intensity of some of the masters in their love sonnets, he escapes on the other hand, the flamboyance and extravagance of many of our lesser singers.

One of the most successful of the sonnets is entitled "To the Uttermost." The sestet leaves a satisfying sense of completeness:

At last she'll sleep with neither fret nor woe,  
All passions rested with the rested heart;  
Her fears aside, no need for further show,  
No need to play our wretched mummer's part;  
One by that bed in human form or ghost  
Shall stand and worship to the uttermost.

*Shadows on a Wall*, by Stanton A. Coblenz (Poetic Publications, New York. \$1.00).

The poems and more especially the sonnets of Mr. Coblenz have long been familiar to readers of the general magazines as well as those devoted to poetry.

"Shadows on a Wall" reveals a disciplined art which has led the author after much experience and much pondering on philosophy to an inevitable disillusion. But it is fortunately a disillusion untinged with bitterness. The poet, interested deeply in humanity, not merely in his own changing emotional reactions, has been able to vision something beyond the inevitability of mortal decay, even if it is not precisely the thing which his morning dreams had shadowed forth.

The philosophy of Mr. Coblenz, especially in the earlier half of the book, points strongly to a firm belief in reincarnation; a belief which has led many poets of all ages to their highest flights sus-

tained on singing wings by an abiding faith in spiritual continuity. In the present case the theory leads to interesting but not always cheerful results as in "Shakespeare Returns," where he says of the English master:

Immortal Shakespeare came to earth again,  
A new-born infant sprung of peasant stock

---

Lost in the mournful strife for bread and wages,  
Romance and splendor shone beyond his ken.

---

Yet in his breast continual songs were singing,  
And wars were fought and won within his mind,  
And empires planned; he felt the lash and stinging  
Of some impetuous urge obscure and blind.  
But to his hands the stubborn loam was clinging—  
He was no more than millions of his kind.

This is a good sonnet, but one is led to wonder as to the poet's school of philosophy, since the believer in reincarnation commonly insists upon the exact working out of a karmic law which would lead to totally different results in such a case as that of "immortal Shakespeare."

*Of Various Moods*, by George L. Whittaker (Wetzel Publishing Co., Inc., Los Angeles, California. \$1.50).

The outstanding feature of Mr. Whittaker's work is its complete sincerity, a virtue which results in an unusually consistent viewpoint which distinguishes the entire volume.

The author has chosen a middle course between the morbid and cynical attitude of the ultra-moderns and the cloying ecstasies of a few feeble optimists whose work resembles a half-hearted echo of the lesser Victorians.

Yet while such an attitude may be admirable up to a certain point it incurs a serious danger,—that of lukewarmness. Although sincerity is always accounted one of those traits for which the possessor is to be awarded a golden crown hereafter (or have fashions changed in heaven as elsewhere, resulting in settings in platinum?), a lukewarm sincerity does not result in a vital art.

The artist who moves us deeply is the one who either loves or hates very intensely, not the one who sits viewing the phenomena of life with complete neutrality and equilibrium.

"If you must weep then give me, wholesome tears"  
begins a sonnet entitled "Lachrymal," and it is by no means a bad opening sonnet line, but when the poet proceeds to instruct his lady as to exactly how and when she shall weep, he becomes suspiciously didactic, a weakness not entirely offset by the grace of some of his phrases.

It is quite possible that Mr. Whittaker has deliberately disciplined himself against extravagance of expression. If so, he has gone a little too far. Nor has he gained a sufficient detachment to see his work as a complete unity, and so sustain throughout any individual poem, the highest level reached in it.

The following lines from "To a Seeker of Truth and Beauty," for instance, are weakened by being followed immediately by a reference to a "faded pansy blossom."

Have you ever,  
O Seeker of Truth and Beauty,  
Gazed upon the winter sunset  
And beheld in it the face  
Of one beloved?

*Little Miss April*, by Anne Robinson (The Oglethorpe University Press, Oglethorpe University, Georgia. \$1.50.)

(Reviewed by Agnes Kendrick Gray)

"Little Miss April" is a picturesque volume of poems for children; and their elders, even more than the young readers, will appreciate the delicate craftsmanship of the verse. The format of the book will appeal to all ages, for its appearance will catch the fancy at once. The cover is blue and cream, with a graceful silhouette of that flower-bringing elf, little Miss April herself!

The type used for the poems is large and clear, the verses are well spaced upon the pages, and scattered throughout the volume are charming silhouettes and line drawings to add piquancy to the text. The illustrations are by two artists; rather an unusual device, but it gives variety and novelty to the pictures. Grace M. Paynter is the lovely silhouettist, and the drawings, which have a decidedly original touch, are by Lecian von Bernuth. The glimpses of their work afforded in this volume, give one the wish to know more of these artists.

Lured into the pages by the attractive appearance of the book one turns eagerly to the poems, to taste their delicate flavor. The title poem "Little Miss April" gives the windy, spring-like mood of the verses and I quote the first three stanzas:

Hear the wind bluster,  
Hear the wind sigh...  
Roustabout March  
Is calling, "Good-by."

Hear the wind chuckle,  
Whisper and say,  
"Little Miss April  
Is coming today."



Little Miss April  
In silvery blue,  
With lilac umbrella  
And daffodil shoe.

The poems are nearly all very gay in tone, like a peal of bells, and being attuned to very young readers, they deal with subjects familiar to and beloved by children: the gentler aspects of nature—flowers, spring rains, small wild creatures, Jack Frost, the beauty of snowflakes—and toys, pets, lullabies and little prayers.

The author, Anne Robinson, seems especially successful in her verses about animals; she seems to catch their inherent humor, charm and appealing qualities, and she makes the birds very real and individual in her descriptions of their songs and ways. "Grackle," "Afternoon Tea," "Sanderlings" and "Mocker" are well-done and vivid, to mention only a few. "Mister Toad," which I shall quote, is brief and pithy, leaving much to the imagination of the reader—an excellent thing in poetry.

Hippity-hop  
The old toad came,  
Streaking the garden  
In green flame.

His mouth was wide  
And sticky, too;  
He opened it quick  
Before bugs knew!

Just what happened  
They could not tell,  
But the toad grew greener  
And fatter, as well...

One of the most appealing pages is 68, which contains an effective little poem, "Rough and Ready," and a delightful drawing of two engaging terrier puppies. The verses follow:

Little pups  
With crooked ears,  
Are like motors  
Without gears,

Zigzagging  
About, until  
Bumping noses,  
They stand still.

A few of the poems seem a little *too* young, and to err (in the opinion of this reviewer) on the side of sentimentality. This is a fault almost unavoidable in writing for children, for the grown writer, of necessity, must look back over a long stretch of years, and is apt to see childhood through a veil of emotion. Even Stevenson sometimes fell into this pitfall.

The imaginative quality of the author flashes out through the poems, and she knows what children love and see in the world around them. Who has not lain upon his back in the grass and pictured shapes in the clouds? Miss Robinson has caught this universal delight of childhood in one of her most whimsical little poems:

### SKY PICTURES

The sunset clouds are camels,  
An endless caravan;  
The blue sky is a desert,  
Now flecked with gold for man.

Dark pyramids cast shadows  
Across a sunset stile;  
A gray mist rises, sphinx-like;  
We see the river Nile...

